

Pope congratulates Bush

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul, keen for the Vatican to have a say in the search for Middle East peace, on Friday congratulated the United States on its success in bringing Arabs and Israelis to the negotiating table. U.S. President George Bush, on a brief visit to the Vatican at the end of a two day NATO summit, briefed the Pope on the Middle East peace conference which opened in Madrid under U.S. and Soviet sponsorship on Oct. 30. The 71-year-old Polish Pope complimented U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on "your very important work to bring peace" to the Middle East. "We're working on it," replied Mr. Baker, architect of the Madrid talks which brought Israel and all its Arab neighbours face to face for the first time. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said the Pope and Mr. Bush concentrated on the Middle East and Yugoslavia during private talks lasting over an hour in the positive study. "President Bush outlined to the holy father the steps taken and the perspectives opened (by the Madrid conference) for a stable, secure and just peace in the Middle East," he said.

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Kurdish envoys in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi government, applying an undeclared economic stranglehold to Kurdistan, reported in veiled terms Friday that Kurdish envoys have come to Baghdad to discuss it. Four representatives from northern Iraq led by Sami Abdul Rahman had arrived to talk about "security, stability and the performance of departments in the Kurdish autonomous region," the official Iraqi News Agency reported. According to eyewitness reports from the north, rebel-controlled areas are suffering from a crippling government blockade now in its third week (see page 2). Fuel supplies have run out. Food prices have nearly doubled. Government employees are no longer being paid. Iraqi media have said nothing directly about the squeeze. Nor do they mention reports of fresh clashes between Iraqi government forces and Kurdish guerrillas near the government-controlled oil town of Kirkuk. Diplomats in Baghdad say the government seems headed for a showdown with the Kurds to try to force through an autonomy pact for the region which has been under negotiations since early May.

German firm suspected of illegal arms sales to Iran, Iraq

RAVENSBURG, Germany (R) — German prosecutors said Friday they were investigating a firm suspected of illegally supplying arms-making equipment to Iran and Iraq. A spokesman for the public prosecutor in the Bavarian town of Ravensburg said the firm was suspected of delivering machine tools to both countries in 1989 that could be used to produce gun barrels. The deliveries went via Switzerland in contravention of German export laws, the prosecutor said. The firm's offices and those of an outside designer in Heilbronn were searched on Tuesday. Documents seized in the searches were being examined, the spokesman said. Neither firm was identified. One or two Swiss firms were also suspected of involvement and Swiss authorities were investigating, he said.

Israeli envoy to France to resign

PARIS (R) — Israel's ambassador to France, Ovadia Sofer, said Friday he was leaving his post to seek a place on the ruling right-wing Likud party's list in next year's parliamentary elections. "I have received strong encouragement to start a political career from both Prime Minister (Yitzhak) Shamir and Foreign Minister (David) Levy," Mr. Sofer told the French Jewish radio stations Radio Communautaire-Judaïque FM. Mr. Sofer, who makes no secret of his hawkish political views, has been ambassador to France since 1983. His long tenure has been criticised in the Israeli press which charges that his status as a Shamir protege made him "untouchable."

Turkish police hold leftist squad

ANKARA (R) — Police have arrested six alleged members of a left-wing squad trained by guerrillas in Lebanon to kill senior Turkish officials, a senior security official said Friday. Anti-terrorist police teams arrested the six men during a series of operations launched on Oct. 12. They seized two automatic rifles, two pistols, ammunition and explosives, the official said. The group was trained in assassination techniques for eight months in a guerrilla camp in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, he added.

IAEA: Iraq made nuclear tests but no bomb

VIENNA (R) — Iraq successfully tested key parts of a nuclear bomb just months before its invasion of Kuwait but could not have produced a complete weapon, U.N. nuclear experts said Friday. A spokesman for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed a report by British television on Thursday which said Iraq made 20 successful tests on the key components of a bomb in the first five months of 1990. But he denied assertions by the Channel Four news programme that Iraq just had to put the system together to explode nuclear bomb. "They did make about 20 tests, but these are all small aspects, important, but on a very small scale, and they don't have the material on a scale large enough for a bomb," Hans Mayer said. The Channel Four programme quoted U.S. expert Stephen Bryen as saying he believed Baghdad still had the means to make a bomb despite U.N. efforts to destroy its nuclear potential following the Gulf war.

U.N. to give \$15m in aid to Iraq

ROME (AP) — A U.N. agency said Thursday it will send Iraq \$15 million in food aid. The World Food Programme said the aid consisted of 27,200 metric tonnes of cereals, 3,400 metric tonnes of vegetable oil, and 1,100 metric tonnes of corn soy blend, and 915 metric tonnes of dried milk. The World Food Programme is a division of the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Last month, FAO said many Iraqis were faced with malnutrition. The U.N. Security Council is trying to persuade Iraq to sell \$1.6 billion of oil.

Obstacles face attempts to reshuffle government

By Nermene Mirzad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Attempts by Prime Minister Taher Masri to reshuffle his government and avert a political crisis before the reconvening of Parliament in December appeared to run into hurdles Friday as the various proposals failed to provide the government with a stronger base in the Lower House.

According to government officials, Mr. Masri is not expected to reshuffle his government unless he can ensure a "solid 45 to 47 votes in any upcoming vote of confidence." The bargaining with the different parliamentary blocs has so far been unable to secure such a plurality and more realistic expectations continue to calculate a maximum of 43 votes in favour of the government.

So far a number of meetings between the prime minister and the 23-strong Muslim Brotherhood Bloc have only produced

promises of adopting "passive" opposition to the government in return for the premier's National parliamentary bloc's support for the reelection of Abdul Latif Arabyat as speaker of the Lower House.

The 18-member Constitution Bloc, on the other hand, has asked for six ministerial seats in addition to the government's support for their speaker candidate Thounan Hindawi, who is leader of the bloc. A source within the bloc, however, said his bloc was willing to bargain over the number of ministerial seats allotted the group if they were promised support for Mr. Hindawi's nomination.

To add to an already complex situation, the Democratic Bloc, which is the nucleus of the Jordanian Arab National Democratic Alliance (JANDA), as experienced splits in its positions towards Mr. Masri's government, as a result of administrative decisions

(Continued on page 5)

Maxwell to be buried in Jerusalem Sunday

TEL AVIV (AP) — The body of British publisher Robert Maxwell was flown here Friday for burial, but controversy continued to swirl around both his life and death.

In Spain, his widow cast doubt on an autopsy report saying Mr. Maxwell died of heart failure. In Australia, a self-described former Israeli intelligence agent levelled new charges that the publisher was involved in weapons sales to Iran.

Mr. Maxwell's corpse arrived on a private jet from the Canary Islands. The 68-year-old publisher's mangled body was found in the Atlantic Ocean off the Spanish island Tuesday after he disappeared from his yacht.

His widow, Elisabeth Maxwell, left the plane with her head down, wearing a dark blue hat and sun glasses. Reporters were kept away.

She was accompanied by her daughter, Ghislaine, and her

eldest son, Philip. The coffin, covered in a Jewish prayer shawl, was taken from the airport members of a Jewish burial society wearing skullcaps.

Mr. Maxwell, a Czechoslovak Jew, will be buried Sunday on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives. Jewish tradition holds that those buried on the sacred mount will be resurrected first when the Messiah comes.

Mr. Maxwell ran a troubled two billion media empire that included New York's Daily News, London's Daily Mirror and other British tabloids.

Spanish officials said Mr. Maxwell died a natural death, apparently of heart failure.

But before leaving the Canary Islands, Mrs. Maxwell suggested the autopsy performed on the publisher could not be regarded as the final word on his cause of death.

(Continued on page 5)

Hawatmeh arrives, says DFLP not against conference

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Secretary General of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) Nayef Hawatmeh arrived in Amman Friday as part of a tour in the countries of the region which will also take him to Morocco.

In an arrival statement, Mr. Hawatmeh said his visit to Jordan was aimed at coordinating pan-Arab positions in order to restore Palestinian and Arab rights.

Mr. Hawatmeh, who arrived here from Damascus, said: "The Middle East region is on the threshold of a new era during which we must work together to achieve our goals."

(Continued on page 5)

Israeli driver attacked

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Two Palestinians stabbed and strangled an Israeli taxi driver Friday then threw him from his cab near the West Bank town of Ramallah, the army command said.

The driver, identified only as a 40-year-old resident of Jerusalem, was treated for slight injuries to his face and hands at Hadassah Hospital in 'Ain Karim, an army spokesman said.

Police and security forces chased after the hijacked cab and later found it abandoned, Israel Radio said.

The wounded man was found by Red Cross workers who happened to be passing, then handed over to soldiers at a junction outside Jerusalem, an army spokesman said.

Tehi driver said two Arab passengers stabbed him in his face and hands with a small knife, tried to strangle him with a wire, then threw him from his cab, the spokesman added.

Also Friday, the Rehovot magistrate court extended by 15 days the detention of an Israeli suspected of selling guns to Arabs in the area of the West Bank city of Hebron, Israel Radio said.

The daily Haaretz said the man and an accomplice stole 10 rifles from a military base and sold them to Arabs.

Settlement named city

Maaleh Adumim, the largest Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank, was officially designated a city a week before the Madrid peace talks, the newly-named mayor said Friday.

Mayor Amotz Terman denied reports in the daily Yedioth Achronot that Dani Yatom, head of the army's central command, of

Hezbollah-Palestine released a picture Friday of an Israeli soldier it claims to hold.

The black-and-white photograph of the soldier identified as Yaqoub Simertsikai was accompanied by a statement from Hezbollah-Palestine.

The statement said the picture was released on a promise made in October, when the previously unheard of group provided the number of the soldier's military card.

Israeli rockets destroyed a school for orphans and an office for Palestinians in two South Lebanon Palestinian refugee camps on Thursday, killing two civilians.

Israeli gunners fired more than 100 shells into a string of villages near the 15-km deep buffer zone Thursday and SLA militiamen blew up a suspected guerrilla base overnight.

The shelling began on Oct. 20 when Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hezbollah (Party of God) stepped up attacks on Israel in a bid to sabotage the opening of Middle East peace talks in Madrid.

Israel retaliated with six air strikes and by firing more than 1,250 shells out of the zone. It warned residents to curb guerrilla activity or risk greater violence.

Hizbullah guerrillas have killed six Israeli soldiers in the security zone in the last two and a half weeks.

A group calling itself

YTPRE, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli and its militia allies bombarded villages in South Lebanon Friday, wounding at least three civilians.

Security sources said dozens of shells from Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) artillery batteries hit villages just west of Israel's self-declared "security zone" in the south.

Israel's army had nothing to add to a statement in October when it said a thorough investigation found "no soldier is missing answering to the published name."

At the time, military sources said the name and the serial number belonged to two different people and both were accounted for.

The identification cards handed out Friday were in Hebrew.

The Arabic statement gave the soldier's military serial number as 4693737 and the identity card number as 28915395 that said Simertsikai was born Oct. 2, 1971.

Syria firm on progress before group talks with Israel, PLO says

By Jane Arraf
Reuter

AMMAN — Syria and the Palestinians still want concessions from Israel before they will let Middle East peace talks go to the third stage, a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said Friday.

"The Syrians want substantial progress to be achieved in the bilateral talks on withdrawal, freezing of settlements and applying the Geneva conventions on treatment of civilians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"... We cannot welcome the normalisation of ties before having some progress on our problems," he said.

In the second stage, the main Arab delegations face Israel separately on the central questions — peace and borders. Multilateral talks are for discussion of broader secondary issues such as arms control and water rights.

Syria wants Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights seized in 1967 and is worried that attending talks on regional issues would imply normalisation of ties and weaken its bargaining position.

In an arrival statement, Mr. Hawatmeh said his visit to Jordan was aimed at coordinating pan-Arab positions in order to restore Palestinian and Arab rights.

Mr. Hawatmeh, who arrived here from Damascus, said: "The Middle East region is on the threshold of a new era during which we must work together to achieve our goals."

(Continued on page 5)

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Palestinians expect tough Israeli stand, then ceding of territory

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP)

— Leaders in the Palestinian peace delegation said in interviews published Friday that they expected Israel to take a hardline stance in negotiations but to eventually cede control over land to Palestinians.

The daily Maariv reported, meanwhile, that the Palestinians have demanded a list of 23 confidence-building measures from Israel to move forward the peace process. The paper said Israeli sources denied the list was accurate.

Among the demands was freeing hundreds of prisoners jailed without trial, reopening closed universities, allowing display of the Palestinian flag and applying the Geneva conventions on treatment of civilians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Asks if the Palestinians would accept autonomy for the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip without the land itself, Mr. Hafez Al Assad.

Mr. Abed-Rabbo, a PLO Executive Committee member, told Reuters on return from the Syrian port of Latakia the Palestinians also insisted on substantial progress during the bilateral talks with Israel, most likely to begin in two weeks near Washington.

"... We cannot welcome the normalisation of ties before having some progress on our problems," he said.

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"I think the (Israeli) delegation will stick to the line Shamir expressed in his speech," he said.

Mr. Shamir, in his address, repeatedly referred to Jews' "right" to the "land of Israel," which Israeli right-wingers use to mean present-day Israel, plus the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He said the basis of the Arab-Israeli conflict was "not territorial."

Faisal Hussein, who headed the advisers to the delegation, also told Davar that the biggest success of the Madrid meeting was placing the Palestinians' right before the world.

He said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) shared the same view that "our chances of succeeding are better in the political way than in the military one."

Asked if the Palestinians would accept autonomy for the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip without the land itself, Mr. Hussein replied:

"Israel does not want to give us control over land and water sources in the framework of the interim agreement, but eventual-

ly they will give it to us." Davar did not say where the land was.

Delegates Hanan Ashrawi, Dr. Nabil Qassem and Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem were attacked because they are Christians, and Dr. Abdul Shafai, a Muslim, was called an infidel.

At the Al Rawda Mosque in the West Bank city of Nablus, Sheikh Ahmad Haj Ali called the delegates "a group of atheists and seculars who have no linkage with Hanan Al Sharif."

Sheikh Haj Ali, 52, from a refugee camp in Nablus, was detained twice during the nearly four-year Palestinian uprising for belonging to the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas.

As an attempt to derail U.S.-backed Middle East peace talks and Beirut's drive to encourage West Bankers to return after 15 years of civil war.

"We believe it was meant to represent... an obstacle for the peace conference in Lebanon," Interior Minister Sami Al Khatib said after visiting the university.

There was no immediate responsibility claim. Iranian-backed Shiites had threatened attacks on American targets in protest against the Arab-Israeli peace talks in Madrid.

The library building across a lane from college hall was also devastated by the 3:40 a.m. (0140 GMT) thunderous blast that jolted thousands of Beirut residents inside and outside the campus.

Middle East News

U.S. auditors to check how Israel spent \$400m

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. auditors are going to Israel to see if its government spent \$400 million in loans guaranteed by the United States to build housing for Soviet Jewish immigrants, officials said Thursday.

The team from the General Accounting Office (GAO), the agency which monitors how the government spends money appropriated by Congress, will also examine Israel's ability to repay its foreign debt, said a GAO official.

The auditors are being sent at the request of Sen. Robert Byrd, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity. Another official said the auditors will probably leave next week.

Mr. Byrd's office had no immediate comment.

Israel's request for guarantees to underwrite its borrowing from financial institutions has stirred controversy because of concern that the money would be used to build housing for Soviet Jews in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The United States opposes Jewish settlement in the Palestinian lands, viewing them as obstacles to peace.

Israel denies using the guarantees for housing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israeli embassy spokeswoman Ruth Yaron said any GAO team going to Israel would receive "full cooperation."

Israel has received an unprecedented wave of Soviet immigrants — nearly 400,000 over the past two years — and as many as one million may come in the next few years, Israel's experts expect.

The Israeli government has asked for an additional \$10 billion in U.S. guarantees for housing.

McDonnell Aircraft Company,

U.S. not planning quick sale of jets to Saudis — officials

WASHINGTON (R) — The Bush administration is not planning any quick sales of warplanes to the Middle East despite a report that Saudi Arabia has requested 72 F-15 fighters from McDonnell Douglas Corp., administration officials say.

Such a sale, which could be worth more than \$4 billion to McDonnell Douglas, would have to be formally proposed by the White House and approved by Congress before it could become official.

The administration sought the delay to avoid antagonizing the Arabs as peace talks were getting under way.

The Arabs were pleased with the delay, viewing it as a departure from the traditional U.S. bias towards Israel and as a commitment to a more evenhanded policy. That, in turn, enhanced U.S. credibility as a mediator in the talks which got under way last week in Madrid.

The officials said any additional sales of U.S. military equipment to the Middle East, including the Arab states in the Gulf, were unlikely while the budding Middle East peace process was in its current phase.

The peace process, which brought Israeli and Arab representatives together in Madrid for the first time last week, could go on for years and the administration officials did not make clear what they meant by the "current phase."

But any proposal for such a sale of sophisticated jets to an Arab state at the current time would be sure to raise strong objections from congressional supporters of Israel.

The administration officials declined to say whether President George Bush planned to offer additional arms to the Saudis and other friendly Arab states next year.

McDonnell Aircraft Company,

Israel, guerrillas stir cycle of violence in S. Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — Israel and pro-Iranian guerrillas are dragging South Lebanon through a vicious cycle of attack and counter-attack far removed from Middle East peace talks.

Israel says it must hit back when attacked while Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hezbollah organization says the only way to end Israeli raids is to wipe out the Jewish state.

The Middle East peace talks in Madrid last week brought more Arab-Israeli bloodshed to South Lebanon.

Hezbollah stepped up attacks in an attempt to sabotage the negotiations. Israel increased raids and shelling — as Hezbollah hoped it would because it believes this will fuel a bigger anti-Israel war.

Israeli helicopters damaged a school for orphans and an office of Palestinian groups in two South Lebanon refugee camps on Thursday, killing two civilians and wounding eight.

Israeli gunners pounded villages near their South Lebanon "security zone" and Israeli-backed militiamen blew up a suspected guerrilla base overnight.

Helicopters fired rockets into the "Ain Al Hilweh refugee camp on the edge of Sidon, south of Beirut, hitting the Badr Islamic School for orphans and wounding five children.

Witnesses said the rockets missed what was apparently their real target — a post of the Palestinian Force 17 security unit next door. The Israeli army said the aircraft had hit a command post of Fateh.

Rockets fired by four Israeli Cobra helicopters earlier wrecked an office of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) in Rashidieh refugee camp near the port of Tyre, two civilians were killed and three wounded.

Israel and the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) have fired 1,200 shells in two weeks into the south after Hezbollah guerrillas killed six Israeli soldiers.

Hezbollah chief Sheikh Abbas Musawi said: "As long as we are afraid of Israel and there is no deterrent to it through resistance operations, it will continue its aggression."

Afghan rebel team says Moscow holds key to peace

ISLAMABAD (R) — An Afghan guerrilla delegation due to visit the Soviet Union said Friday that the key to peace in Afghanistan lay with Moscow.

"I do believe that after the defeat of the Soviets in Afghanistan and the defeat of communism in Soviet Russia and the changes in the world, our negotiations with the Soviets will be constructive, important and effective," guerrilla leader Burhamuddin Rabbani said.

But unless the Soviet Union came up with new proposals to end 13 years of war in Afghanistan, the talks would come to nothing, he told a news conference before leaving for Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union.

He declined to say what prop-

osed the 11-man delegation would take to Moscow or whether they would have a list of Soviet prisoners still held by the Mujahedeen guerrillas more than two years after the last Soviet troops left Afghanistan.

The prisoners are one of the main concerns of the Soviet government, which would like them treated as a humanitarian issue rather than as pawns in the political negotiations. Moscow believes 60 to 80 prisoners may still be alive.

In September the Soviet Union and the United States agreed to halt weapons supplies to the Afghans by Jan. 1. The United States says it has already stopped deliveries.

The guerrilla delegation, reportedly delayed by wrangling

among the divided Mujahedeen leadership over who should go and what proposals to take, will arrive in Moscow on Sunday after a two-day pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia.

They are due to have talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin and Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin. No time limit has been set for the talks.

Three hardline guerrilla groups, including the powerful Hizb-i-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, refused to join the delegation, despite heavy pressure from Pakistan.

Mr. Rabbani told reporters the Mujahedeen had no intention of negotiating the creation of a transitional government with the Soviet Union, saying that was for the Afghans alone.

Mr. Rabbani said he believed an absolute majority of Afghans backed talks with the Soviet Union, which the guerrilla groups argue still controls events in Kabul.

Newly released scroll suggests execution of 'Messiah'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Newly released text from the Dead Sea scrolls mention the execution of a Messiah-like leader, suggesting that some ancient Jews shared the Christian concept of the slaying of a Messiah, scholars said Thursday.

One fragment contains five lines of text that describes a "leader of the community" being "put to death" and mentions "piercings" or "wounds," said Robert Eisenman, a professor of Middle East religions at California State University, Long Beach.

The text also uses Messiah-related terms such as "the staff," "the branch of David" and the "root of Jesse," said Mr. Eisenman, who helped translate the scroll fragments.

Its language is close to that in the Old Testament book of Isaiah, which says "For our sins he was wounded." Many Christians see Isaiah's prophecies to aid their understanding of Jesus.

Mr. Eisenman, who helped translate the fragments, said it was always thought that Jews at the time of Jesus expected a Messiah who would restore Israel to dominance politically. Yet the newly released text shows that the Jewish scroll writers had the idea of a Messiah who would suffer and die.

That shows that was not an idea unique to Christianity," Mr. Wise said.

"Anything which potentially impugns the uniqueness of the Christian message can be seen by some people as invalidating it or weakening it," said Mr. Wise.

The scrolls contain the oldest known copies of the Old Testament and numerous other writings. Scholars believe they were written by a Jewish sect some time between 200 B.C. and A.D. 50.

The 800 scrolls, most in fragments, were found in caves near the Dead Sea in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Stored in Jerusalem, the scrolls contain priceless information about the period

that spawned Christianity and modern Judaism.

A group of scholars, working under Jordanian and later Israeli auspices, controlled access to many of the scrolls for 40 years, drawing criticism that they were sluggish in publishing translations.

The Huntington Library in San Marino broke the monopoly in September by giving qualified scholars free access to its 3,000 photographs of scroll fragments. Mr. Eisenman was the first granted access.

If the translation of the fragments is correct, the text "is very significant," said James Tabor, a University of North Carolina associate professor of Christian origins and ancient Judaism.

"It tightens the connection tremendously between the early Christians and the people who wrote the scrolls," said Mr. Tabor.

"It's an interesting text. I doubt if one would call it

withheld.

Mr. Eisenman and Mr. Tabor said scroll editors could have published the text years ago and now want to play down its significance because it could damage traditional religious views. Mr. Ulrich denied the text was withheld.

explosive or revolutionary," said Eugene Ulrich, a University of Notre Dame theology professor. As chief editor of the scrolls, Mr. Ulrich was among the scholars who had early access to the documents.

Many concepts once believed to be uniquely Christian later were found to have been mentioned by Jews who wrote the scrolls, Mr. Ulrich said.

Emile Puech, another of the scrolls' editors, revealed the same text in Madrid last March during a closed-door meeting of official scroll scholars. Mr. Ulrich said, adding it will be published soon.

Mr. Eisenman and Mr. Tabor said scroll editors could have published the text years ago and now want to play down its significance because it could damage traditional religious views. Mr. Ulrich denied the text was withheld.

The price rises, which range from 75 to 95 per cent over 10 days, affect flour, rice, sugar, tea and cheese.

Many Kurds are looking elsewhere to feed their families.

One man drove from Sulaimaniyah to government-controlled Kirkuk, outside the blockade area, to buy food.

U.S. agencies differ over war costs

WASHINGTON (AP) — Amer-

ican taxpayers may have to pay

\$7.1 billion of the \$61.1 billion it estimates will be the total cost of fighting the Gulf war, the Defense Department says.

Although Congress has set aside \$15 billion to pay for the war, the figures appear to be the Pentagon's highest estimate by the allied contributions.

The Pentagon issued its statement on the cost to taxpayers Thursday after Defense Department spokesman Pete Williams disputed a GAO report this week that the United States will collect \$300 million more than it spent in the Gulf war if the allies pay what they have pledged.

Mr. Williams said the GAO was "incorrect" in its analysis, but a spokesman for the GAO, Cleve Corlett, said the agency, Congress's investigative arm, stands by its report. The GAO has repeatedly taken issue with the Pentagon's estimates of its war costs, contending they are excessive.

Earlier this year, the congressional General Accounting Office (GAO) said it did not believe U.S. taxpayers should have to bear any of the costs, since they should be covered by the contributions of the nations that benefited from the war effort.

The \$7.1 billion expense cited by the Pentagon includes \$3.1 billion in supplemental appropriations and reprogramming of funds from the 1990 fiscal year; \$1.2 billion in equipment that will not be replaced; and \$2.8 billion in costs and long-term personnel benefits that will not be funded

would have to come from the \$1 billion fund appropriated by Congress as the Gulf regional defense fund.

In its report the GAO said the allies' contribution — if fulfilled — will amount to \$48.3 billion, "or almost \$800 million more than the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) funding estimate."

The \$800 million, the report said, "could be used to reimburse the treasury for funding provided in fiscal year 1990 or for other operation-related expenses at the rate of \$15 billion of U.S. funds that were already incurred by the United States."

"We believe the balance may be even greater because funding requirements do not appear to be as high as OMB's estimate," says the GAO.

In its statement, the Pentagon said estimates put the overall cost to the nation at \$61.1 billion and the cost to taxpayers would be an estimated \$7.1 billion.

The spokesman said the funds

Iraqi blockade in north worries relief workers

SULAIMANIYEH (R) — The

northern Iraqi city of Sulaimaniyeh, one of the centres of Kurdish resistance to the Baghdad government, is suffocating from the effects of a government blockade now in its third week.

Baghdad, apparently intent on persuading the Kurds to sign an agreement on autonomy, has cut off supplies of food and fuel and has ordered civil servants either to go to work in Baghdad or forfeit their salaries.

As a result petrol is in short

supply, if not impossible to find,

food prices have risen by up to 95 per cent and government employees are working without pay.

Thousands of Kurdish refugees from fighting in October cannot move, either to home or to permanent shelter in camps, because they have no fuel for their vehicles.

"Right now (they) are undecided whether to continue to Sayed Sadik (refugee camp) or return to Kalar," says Egbert Menemenioglu, a senior U.N. official based in Sulaimaniyeh.

"We're trying to get people down from the mountains, but we have no way to transport them."

At least 10,000 Kurds from the town of Kalar are camped along the main road about 60 kilometres south of Sulaimaniyeh and are unable to move.

"Right now (they) are undecided whether to continue to Sayed Sadik (refugee camp) or return to Kalar," says Egbert Menemenioglu.

"We're trying to get people down from the mountains, but we have no way to transport them."

The United Nations is even more disturbed by the prospect of prolonged food shortages in Kurdistan.

The Baghdad government has no control over large areas of Kurdistan but until the second half of October it continued to supply rebel-held areas with subsidized fuel and food rations.

It also paid teachers, doctors, engineers, traffic police and municipal officials throughout northern Iraq.

Very few have complied with the order to move south.

Teachers at the Rangin secondary school for girls in Sulaimaniyeh, for example, received notice on Oct. 23.

"We met and decided to continue working here without pay as long as we can," said one of the teachers. "Each teacher's ability to resist depends on her individual situation."

The community has rallied to support the schools. Parents are donating money and food to help the teachers and unemployed professionals are teaching without pay.

Long lines have formed at petrol stations, which now open for only a few hours a day, if at all.

Taxi driver Najmeddin Mahmud has queued for three days.

"One day there will be petrol and I will be near the front," he said. "I have no choice, I have a wife and seven children."

The price rises, which range from 75 to 95 per cent over 10 days, affect flour, rice, sugar, tea and cheese.

Many Kurds are looking elsewhere to feed their families.

One man drove from Sulaimaniyeh to government-controlled Kirkuk, outside the blockade area, to buy food.

Mr. Anbari says he knows nothing about Iraqi oil sales

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Iraq's U.N. ambassador said Thursday he knew nothing about rumours that Baghdad was willing to sell some oil under a Security Council resolution permitting it to dispose of up to \$1.6 billion worth over a six-month period.

"As far as I know, nothing at all," Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbari told Reuters.

He said he had not been in touch with Baghdad for 48 hours, and "this is another indication that there is no foundation for the rumour, because otherwise they would have let me know."

Mr. Anbari joked: "You can't raise the prices by saying that the Iraqis are not selling oil."

Asked whether Iraq would then sell oil, if prices firmed, he laughed: "We are caught between the sea and the devil."

But he confirmed he had heard nothing indicating Baghdad planned to sell oil.

The last official word is that Iraq is not interested in implementing the resolution," he added, referring to a Security Council decision last August permitting the sale of up to \$1.6 billion worth of Iraqi oil over a six-month period to enable Baghdad to buy food and other humanitarian supplies.

Iraq, which remains under U.N. sanctions for its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, objects to the resolution because all the proceeds would have to be paid into a U.N. escrow account.

About \$933 million would be

RJ inaugurates new route

AMMAN (J.T.) — The national airline, Royal Jordanian (RJ), has launched the Amman-Toronto route at the rate of one weekly flight and said that the new route was bound to bolster Jordanian-Canadian relations and boost Jordanian tourism.

An RJ statement said that the opening of the Amman-Toronto route, which took place Thursday in cooperation with Air Canada, marks one more step in expanding the national airline's routes to various corners of the world.

The new route manifests the revival of the national airline's activities which witnessed stagnation and recession during the Gulf crisis.

RJ Chief Executive Officer Husam Abu Ghazaleh has said that RJ, which sustained heavy losses as a result of the Gulf crisis, was now returning to normal and increasing its volume.

Mr. Abu Ghazaleh, who last May estimated RJ's losses from the Gulf crisis at \$100 million, said that the airline's operations are gaining momentum. RJ officials cited the opening of the Amman-Beirut and later the Amman-Colombo routes in the summer as signs of improvement in the airline's world-wide operations.

The new route will also help stimulate trade exchanges between Canada and Jordan and contribute towards bringing in more tourist groups and marketing Jordan abroad, especially as Toronto has a large community of Arab descent, an official said.

The official said that the maiden flight along the new route was launched on a Tristar aircraft. At present, the flights will be made on Thursday's but a Monday flight might be added in the spring.

The official said that the decision to operate the Amman-Toronto route came after due studies and research on the part of the national airline.

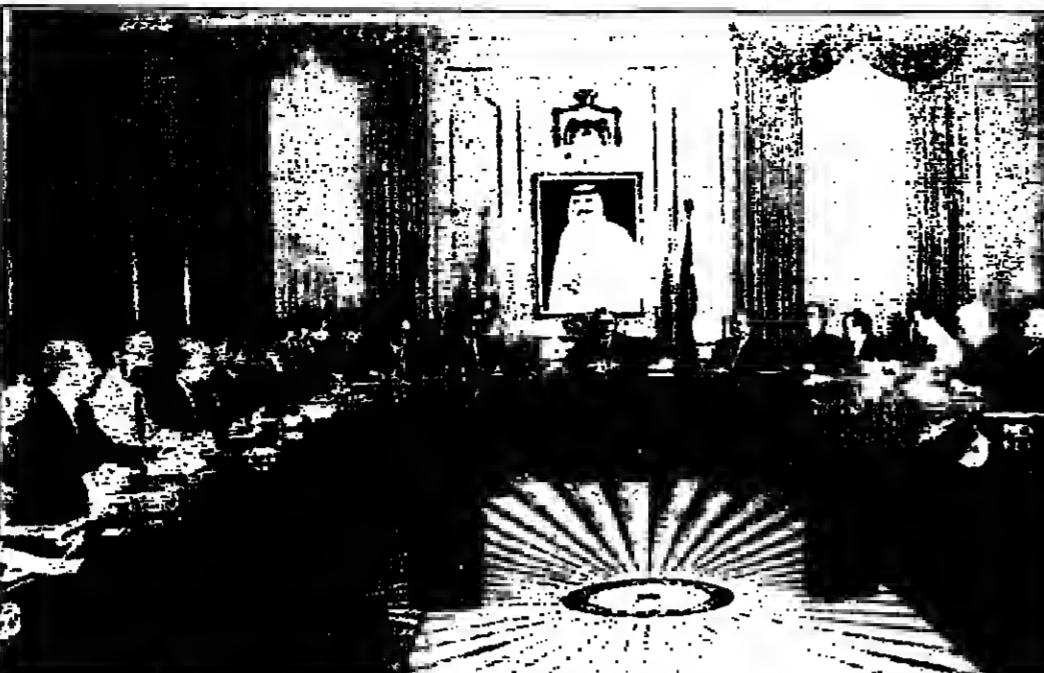
Mr. Abu Ghazaleh, leading a group of senior RJ officials, was in Toronto to receive the first flight and welcome the passengers. A team of representatives of the Jordanian travel and tourist offices from Jordan were also present at the airport.

RJ's maiden flight to Toronto coincided with a report from independent that RJ was elected vice chairman at a conference by Ministers of Communication and Postal Services in the countries of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) which is underway in the city of Bandung.

Addressing the conference, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport and Communications Ali Suleiman presented a number of working papers dealing with Jordan's endeavours in transport and communications fields with Arab and Islamic countries.

The conference, the second of its kind by OIC countries, was discussing a host of issues related to boosting communications among Islamic nations.

Mr. Suleiman is accompanied by heads of ministry departments responsible for postal and communications services including RJ.



GATHERING OF PEACE-SEEKERS: His Majesty King Hussein Thursday received at the Royal Court members of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Peace Conference, and members of the Palestinian advisory committee, which accompanied the delegation to Madrid. King Hussein praised the unique performance of the joint delegation at the Madrid peace conference, noting that it won the Palestinian and Arab causes international support. The King called for further enhancing of Palestinian-Jordanian coordination and stressed the importance of preparing

for the bilateral and multilateral talks. The King also exchanged views with members of the joint delegation and the advisory committee on a number of issues of mutual concern. The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Taher Masri, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's political advisor Adnan Abu Odeh, the King's military secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammad and Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif.

Race promoting tourism begins

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "Ruta Los Nabateos '91," a six-day desert safari on four-wheel drives, set out from Amman Friday morning and will follow the desert highways to reach Aqaba Thursday, Nov. 14.

Organised by a local tourism company in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Royal Jordanian Airlines, the desert safari will be transmitted live on Spanish television by crews covering the event throughout its many stages.

All but one of the 27 participating teams have come from Spain. The aim of the safari is to acquaint the Spanish people with the archaeological and touristic sites in Jordan as well as to promote tourism in Jordan.

The team of Randa Al Nabelsi and Najwa Al Hasan will represent Jordan in a four-wheel drive Toyota pick-up.

Many other Jordanians would have participated, but it seems not much information was available and the event was not publicised enough.

"I'm taking part because I like auto sports and the adventure that goes with it, but I find the idea of only our team representing Jordan a bit strange," Randa Al Nabelsi told the Jordan Times.

The route of the safari will take the participants from Amman to Aqaba via Al Azraq, the Dead Sea, Karak, Petra, Moudawara and Wadi Rum.

The participants will spend a day at the Dead Sea and two nights in Petra and will camp along the way before concluding their safari in Aqaba.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Iraqi art exhibition at the Phoenix Gallery of Art and Culture, Gardens Street.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Arab Traditional House, Selected Items of our Heritage" by Hama Saeq Burdus at Baladna Gallery, Gardens Street.
- ★ Photography exhibition by Adeeb Alwan at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Graphic Arts of the 60s" (from the Federal Republic of Germany) at the Abdulla Hamoud Shousha Foundation gallery (open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.).
- ★ Exhibition of photos by Thierry Girard at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of traditional embroidery and handmade items at the Marriott Hotel.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings depicting scenes from Aqaba and Jordan by Jordanian artist Kamal Shabani Yassin at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition by Iraqi artist Samira Abdal Wahab at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ German film entitled "Ende einer Dienstfahrt" at the Goethe Institute — 8 p.m.

French, Jordanian doctors exchange knowledge, expertise

By Ica Wahbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A scientific event, the first of its kind in Jordan, brought together French and Jordanian doctors who, for two days, last week exchanged knowledge and the latest advances in the field of paediatrics and neonatology.

Organised by the Jordanian-French Medical Association, the two-day conference tackled child nutrition, renal, metabolic and renal diseases and care for mothers during the antenatal and neonatal period as well as monitoring pregnancies.

At a press conference held at the end of the parley, Professor J. Milieze, head of the French-Jordanian Medical Association, said that the choice of the theme for the conference — paediatrics — was not accidental, it was, besides a medical choice, a political one as well. "Separated by war, we decided to meet and discuss children, rebuild relations with the (Jordanian) Arab people. This was an occasion."

Dr. Fathieh Sandi, head of the Jordanian-French Medical Association, added: "Children make up 50 per cent of the population. They are the most vulnerable part of the society, our future. Children are a priority in any country. There is still a lot to do for children healthwise, but also socially, by educating parents, enhancing their awareness of dangers to children."

She said that the conference was successful in that more than 200 doctors participated in the talks and it was the first time a group of French doctors came to Jordan to impart their knowledge.

The novelty of the papers was represented in topics touching on AIDS in infants, vaccination against hepatitis — which has just started in Jordan and is aimed at becoming a comprehensive practice throughout the Kingdom — new aspects of the lymphatic syndrome in renal diseases and the study of the possibility of expanding programmes for screening of the motor development and of the visual or hearing defects in children.

The organisers of the conference expressed satisfaction with the high scientific level and quality of exchanges.

"The first conclusion (we reached) is that the conference has met all the expectation we put in it. This is encouraging for the future when we aim at organising long-range scientific exchanges," said Prof. Milieze.

Earlier in the day, Her Majesty Queen Noor received at Al Ma'wa Palace representatives of the association. The Queen reviewed the significant progress Jordan has made in recent decades in the fields of child and mother care.

The Queen highlighted the conditions of women and children of poor families in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis and said they are the primary victims of political, socio-economic and environmental tragedies.

Discussions during the meeting also focused on the importance of adopting an integrated approach encompassing health care whereby the physical, emotional, mental, political and socio-economic needs of individuals are addressed simultaneously to achieve maximum quality of life improvement.

The Queen cited the model Quality of Life Project, which the Noor Al Hussein Foundation is currently implementing in cooperation with the World Health Organisation, as a successful integrated development project which is based on health development priorities.

Prof. Milieze said the conference had set the pace for scientific collaboration and the association will continue to plan for joint activities which will benefit both the Jordanian and the French side.

Local Short Term Consultant Diagnostic Evaluation in UNRWA Schools

UNRWA Headquarters Branch, Amman-School Education Division is seeking for a consultant to work during a period of 2 months in development and production of "Diagnostic Tests" for the lower elementary level in the Arabic language. The incumbent will work under the supervision of the Chief School Education Division and as part of a team of specialists in lower elementary, Arabic and remedial education.

Qualifications:

- a) A post-graduate teaching in education with some specialisation in evaluation or primary education.
- b) Experience in the design and development of tests, specially educational diagnostic instruments an asset.
- c) Fluency in Arabic necessary but all candidates with above mentioned qualifications are welcomed to apply.

Remuneration for the period of contract will be JD 1,000.

Applications should reach our office by Nov. 17, 1991.

Address: Head of Administration

P.O.Box 484,
UNRWA Headquarters Branch,

Amman - Jordan

UNRWA issues annual report, cites need for additional donations

Special from Vienna

IN HIS annual report to the United Nations General Assembly issued in New York on Nov. 4, the commissioner-general of UNRWA — the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, Iler Turkmen, called on all potential donors for assistance so that UNRWA can continue providing essential services to the rapidly growing refugee community.

Continued financial support for UNRWA's programmes is essential to the lives and welfare of the refugee population, the commissioner-general emphasized. "Broadening the agency's donor base is therefore a major priority," he said.

Mr. Turkmen said that at the end of this year's reporting period in June 1991, Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA numbered 2,519,000. With a growth rate of about 3 per cent per year, this makes the refugees one of the most rapidly expanding populations in the world. There were fewer than one million when the Agency began operations in 1950.

The commissioner-general said that during the one-year reporting period, 157 Palestinians had been killed in clashes with the Israeli security forces. Schools had been shut down for around 40% of the school year.

Between August 1990 and March 1991, "approximately 250,000 persons holding Jordanian passports arrived in Jordan, of whom the majority were of Palestinian origin," he said.

Mr. Turkmen explained, increased needs for education,

Mr. Turkmen described the effects of the Gulf crisis on UNRWA activities. Following a lengthy curfew in the West Bank and Gaza, UNRWA distributed food to the entire refugee population and to needy non-refugees. Loss of earnings and remittances from the Gulf, reduction of domestic and export revenue and increased security measures dramatically aggravated unemployment and weakened still further the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza." Mr. Turkmen said. UNRWA's response has been to expand its income-generating activities and step up job creation through its own construction programme.

Mr. Turkmen expressed his hope that "Palestinians would share in the benefits of the general improvement of the situation in Lebanon," he said. But, he warned, UNRWA is currently faced with high unemployment among the refugees and lack of housing for up to 4,000 squatter families displaced by returning owners.

Between August 1990 and March 1991, "approximately 250,000 persons holding Jordanian passports arrived in Jordan, of whom the majority were of Palestinian origin," he said.

Mr. Turkmen explained, increased needs for education,

health, housing and employment are strongly felt by UNRWA.

Throughout a difficult year, Mr. Turkmen reported that UNRWA improved its first aid and basic life-support services in West Bank and Gaza during the reporting period.

UNRWA taught 365,000 students last year in grades 1-9 (and 10 in Lebanon). Over 5,000 students were trained in UNRWA vocational schools and 640 university scholarships were awarded.

To counter the severe educational disturbances in West Bank and Gaza, UNRWA produced self-learning material and gave them to refugee children. But UNRWA students must live daily with overcrowding and inadequate facilities.

Mr. Turkmen reported that over 77% of UNRWA students were on double shifts. Funds originally planned for school construction had to be used to avoid triple shifting. The commissioner-general noted that contributions "were not sufficient to meet the most urgent requirements of the programme within a reasonable period of time." As existing buildings continue to age and more students than ever before enter UNRWA schools, the situation becomes more critical.

UNRWA provided about 852,000 Palestine refugees with

primary health care during the reporting period, the commissioner-general said. Mr. Turkmen reported that UNRWA improved its first aid and basic life-support services in West Bank and Gaza during the reporting period.

The demands on UNRWA's relief programme were stronger than ever this year, especially in the occupied territory where over 13 per cent of Gazan refugees were receiving direct relief. UNRWA provided financial aid, improvements on shelter and food and clothing to a growing number of needy refugees. But, as the commissioner-general explained, UNRWA is to provide not only relief but some job opportunities. To this end, social services were expanded for which the agency is in need of funds.

Mr. Turkmen welcomed the beginning of peace talks in Madrid and said that he hoped that the process now underway would lead in due course to a just and lasting settlement of the refugee problem and the Palestinian question as a whole.

Virus spread by whitefly responsible for crop damage, report concludes

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The primary cause of the failure of the 1990-91 tomato crop in the Jordan Valley region was the outbreak of a virus that was carried by the whitefly, a government report has found.

A British team of experts hired by the government of Jordan to determine the cause of the crop failure determined that the outbreak of Tomato Yellow Leaf Curl Virus (TYLCV) damaged and incapacitated the crops in the Jordan Valley region.

The report directly contradicts the claim of farmers in the area that the crop failure had been caused by the use of polluted water from the King Talal Dam.

"Although the irrigation water comes from a catchment receiving industrial waste, the mission was given no pathological evidence to support speculation that heavy metal toxicity had damaged the crops," the report stated.

"The whitefly itself is new to Jordan," he continued. "We didn't have the disease or the whitefly but with the introduc-

tion of the whitefly, the disease began to occur."

The disease causes mottling and curling of the leaves, he said, resulting in the plant becoming smaller in size and incapable of producing normal fruits. The disease itself, he added, is eliminated when temperatures cool and the plant may recover to once again become viable.

But the continued presence of the whitefly, especially during the extended summers of the last four or five years, allows the disease to flourish again.

"The fly tries to feed upon the tomato," he said. "If it feeds on an infected tomato plant ... it acquires the virus. So when it flies to another virus-free plant, it feeds upon it and while feeding transmits the virus."

Insecticide-spraying campaigns being conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture are trying to eradicate the fly without much success, Dr. Abu Gharbieh said.

In another finding, the British team found that the high

Architectural designs of Arab cities to be studied at seminar

AMMAN (J.T.) — Working papers dealing with architectural studies on Aqaba, Salt and Irbid will be among a total of 11 working papers to be reviewed at a seminar on Jordanian cities due to open today.

The exhibition comprises three wings covering designs of architectural projects prepared by consultancy firms, universities and other organisations, photographs of Jordanian cities and amateur architectural work. The exhibition also displays posters and photographs of architectural work.

The history of Arab cities in general and means of developing modern Arab cities will also be discussed by seminar participants which is being held in the course of week-long activities organised by the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) at the Professional Association Complex.

Co-ordinating with the seminar, which opens Saturday, groups of engineers will take part in a competition which entails going out to various parts of the country to collect information about architectural designs in Jordan.

CONSULTANT'S SERVICES NEEDED

The services of a professional consultant in Agricultural Policy and Strategy Development with emphasis on research and technology transfer are needed on a part time basis for twelve (12) months. Applicants must have an M.Sc. degree, at least fifteen (15) years of experience and preferably held responsible senior positions in formulating policy and strategy for agricultural development at the national level.

Interested candidates who believe they are qualified to provide these services may apply in writing by submitting a recent biographical data and salary history in English to the Administrative Assistant at:

National Agricultural Development Project Technical Assistance and Services Office

National Centre for Agricultural Research & Technology Transfer
Baqa' - Amman - Jordan
Telephone No. 7254112
Fax No. 726099

Applications must be delivered by hand by 14:00 on Saturday, November 16th, 1991.

The best view of the sea in Aqaba



is found at

On Top

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Dilemma of government

PRIME MINISTER Taher Masri is not to be envied. While he prepares himself for the convening of the Lower House of Parliament's third ordinary session he is racing against time to secure a majority of 41 votes for his government by December 5. Last month, while the House was in recess, 49 deputies out of 80 called on him to resign, even though, as it turned out, they had different reasons for doing so. By Dec. 5 their reasons will still be there. So a repeat of last month's "convenience of interest" might still persist and force the government out of office. To avert this Mr. Masri is currently going into a political fight to ensure a continuation of his mandate and the realisation of his newly-acquired vision, the transformation and modernisation of Jordan's institutions. After all the appointment of Mr. Masri as prime minister was understood to have meant the introduction of new blood and new concepts into the Kingdom's politics. But that vision could not be achieved, of course, without the consent and the cooperation of existing institutions. And Parliament is proving itself to have become a powerful institution. Short of dissolving it, we have to live with it, get its consent and cooperation and look at it, albeit with some scepticism, as the guardian of democracy. We have to do that because many House deputies are vying for power and power alone. They have formed blocs, only one of which is based on ideology, the Muslim Brotherhood. Being the largest bloc in the House, the Brotherhood knows that it can through alliances bring the government down. Yet the bloc knows also very well that, given the difficult circumstances in the region and the Brotherhood's declared position on the peace process, it cannot secure its power, at least not at the present stage. The other blocs, the independent Islamists, the Constitutionalists, the Nationalists and Democrats are not all after power, but many of their members are. Apart from the Democrats, themselves divided, the other blocs have no problem with the Masri government's declared positions, especially on the peace process. The Democrats are split on the peace negotiations. On other issues they, like the others, have no alternative, as one of them has said recently. One other area of contention among the blocs is the seat of House speaker, also coming up Dec. 5. Each of the blocs has a candidate. So there we are: 30 deputies eyeing 25 cabinet posts at the government house on Fourth Circle and one seat at the House itself — in Abdali.

So what choices does Mr. Masri have? He can either form a government that is completely parliamentarian, or one which is all non-parliamentarian or a mixed one. Either choice has its advantages and disadvantages. One danger is to appoint deputies in posts that require technocrats or require people who know more about their field of work than all deputies put together do. Some deputies, it is well known, aspire to posts they cannot handle. This is when democracy equals mediocrity. We hope it does not come to that. But if it does, it will be part of the legacy that Taher Masri and his generation of young politicians inherit.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AT RA'I Arabic daily Friday voiced appreciation of the efforts exerted by the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace conference, but it said that the real battle has not yet begun and it requires ample preparations and hard work. The paper said the delegation should arm itself with vast information about the Arab-Israeli situation and be ready for the coming campaign to ensure the return or Arab rights in the Arab homeland. We are not trying to belittle what has already been achieved, said the paper, but we try to warn against underestimating the enemy's desire to carry out manoeuvres to abort the peace process. The paper said that national unity is required now more than ever before and full backing for negotiators is essential at this crucial stage so that the country can achieve success in its national endeavours. The negotiation process is long and difficult and the start of the peace process in Madrid can never mean that peace is in sight, the paper said. Our initial successes in Madrid, said the paper, serve as an incentive for the negotiators to work harder, and the public to offer them full support and assistance, added the paper. The paper said national unity remains one of the main elements for any success, especially under the present circumstances.

SAWT AL SHAAB daily tackled the question of continued Israeli aggression on Lebanon, accusing the Israelis of being determined to abort the peace process at any cost. The paper said that the Shamir government has never harboured the idea of having peace with the Arab countries and for this reason it is trying to provoke the Arab countries into abandoning the peace process. By building settlements and maintaining aggression on Arab states, Israel is showing the world its true evil intentions of achieving Zionism's ambitious designs and fulfilling the dream of a greater Israel at the expense of the Arab lands, said the daily. The Shamir government is hoping that the Arabs would get fed up and withdraw from the peace process leaving the field to the Israelis to perpetuate their occupation of Arab lands, it said. The paper said that the Shamir government, faced with the initial Arab successes at the Madrid peace conference, seems to be trying to find a way to abort the peace process and deny the Arab successes. What is needed now, said the paper, is full awareness and vigilance on the part of the Arab negotiators, especially the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, as the next stage of the peace negotiations is about to begin.

Palestinians in Lebanon — a dwindling foothold

By Rosemary Sayigh

INHABITANTS of Shatila and camp for 25 years, Abu Qasim and his family left after the intra-Fatah battle of May and June 1988. Veteran of the Amal sieges, he was disgusted by this episode. Now he lives with his wife and four children on the 12th floor of a walk-up building full of displaced people. He refused to take money from any of the resistance groups, preferring to work as a day labourer and keep his independence. His children are in UNRWA schools.

He shows me extensive scarring above the knee. In the Beirut area, if a man does not belong to a pro-Syrian group he is considered an "Arafatist." Informed against by the dissidents, he was picked up and beaten so badly by the Syrians that he had to be treated in hospital. A Palestinian to whom I express shock at Abu Qasim's story tells me, "I see dozens of cases like his every week."

Every family here has its bleak chronicle: Umm Mahmoud looks after a family of eleven: five children, four grandchildren, and her disabled husband. Their home in Shatila is destroyed. The two older daughters, both widows, are looking for work; the sewing factory that employed them shut down because of the Gulf war. On the walls are the photos of three sons killed in the Amal sieges.

Umm Mahmoud shows me photos of their three-storey home and small grocery store. There is a tree-shaded courtyard and rugs hanging from the balconies. A bride and bridegroom cut a lacey wedding cake. Now they are in a small, dark flat, lent them by a

relative; but they are luckier than most families in Gaza Building, who are without running water, electricity or private lavatories.

Nowhere in the diaspora have Palestinians suffered as much as in Lebanon. There are women I lack the courage to meet, mothers who have lost all their children. "Nahma Shab Man-kub," says Abu Qasim, we are a people doomed to disaster. Abu Mujahid compares Palestinians in Lebanon to women who have many children, all of whom die in infancy. His children are in UNRWA schools.

Insecurity

Since the Sabra and Shatila massacre, Palestinians have been the target of arrests, detentions, beatings and killings. Attackers have varied, depending on the period and location: the Lebanese Forces, the SLA, Amal, the Lebanese army, the Syrian army and pro-Syrian resistance groups. Roadblocks are the most usual sites of aggression. Since 1988, a great many men from the Beirut area have spent time in Mezze Prison near Damascus (600 of them were released in March this year). There is no systematic monitoring of such violations.

The restoration of Lebanese army control to the camps, a basic strand in the government's Palestinian policy, cannot be assured for a long time. People remember the repression of the 60s installed by President Chehab, the battles of 1969, 1973 and 1975-6. In 1982-83 Mr. Gemayel's army pursued a campaign of mass arrests in the Beirut camps, while special units pursued individuals. Later, in May 1985, when Amal

launched its first attack against Sabra and Shatila, the army brokered a ceasefire to separate the two sides, then helped Amal to regain lost positions. During the Sidon battle, around 500 Palestinians were arrested at army checkpoints on the Sidon-Beirut road (most were students going to take exams, others were fleeing the battle). After the ceasefire, Lebanese army commanders are reported to have told their adversaries, "you Palestinians caused the break-up of the Lebanese army. Now we shall rebuild our army on your blood."

Fear of vengeance is not lessened by the integration into the army of several thousand Lebanese Forces and Amal militiamen. On the agenda of the PLO's talks with the Lebanese government initiated last April was a proposal that the camps should be patrolled by mixed Lebanese-Arab-Palestinian units. This is likely to be energetically rejected by the army.

Displacement and homelessness

A recent partial survey carried out by PARD (Popular Aid for Relief and Development), a Palestinian NGO set up in 1985 to help those displaced during the Amal-Palestinian battles) found a total of 4,468 homeless families scattered over 87 makeshift locations. More than three quarters have been displaced twice or more, 20 per cent three times or more. An UNRWA register of families whose home have ever been destroyed has passed 7,000. The "Battle of the Camps" (1985-7) was a particularly destructive episode for the inhabitants of Sabra, Shatila, Burj Al

Barjuna and Rashidiya. Many inhabitants of these camps have not been able to return, or have not dared to. These swell the numbers of people from camps destroyed in other wars — Nabariya, Dibaya, Jisr Al Basha, Tall Al Zatar. An estimate of the displaced in West Beirut is 20,000, but there are other shanty-towns around Ain Al-Hilwa and Nahr Al Barid. Yet others are scattered along the coast between Beirut and Sidon, and in the Beqaa. Conditions in most displacement locations are below those in camps, concentrated in the camps, UNRWA and other social services may be hard to reach.

What will happen to these people? According to Taif, all those displaced by war will return to their original homes. As "stabilisation" proceeds, Palestinians will be ordered to leave the occupied buildings and empty land which have been "home" for many since the early '70s. Already some families have received notices to quit. The problem is where to go? No new camp sites have been set up since the mid-80s, in spite of natural population increase; five have been razed by war. Low-income Palestinians cannot afford to buy or rent at current prices, pushed up by inflation and a building shortage.

Under the resistance, Palestinians starved for space spread into waste land around camp sites. No more. On July 17 police accompanied by bulldozers came to reclaim land on the edge of Mar Elias camp, which had been destroyed by UNICEF as a children's playground. Similar recoveries are expected to follow in other areas.

Employment, income and living standards

Always precarious, the material survival of Palestinians in Lebanon is threatened by a combination of old and new constraints. Classified by law as "foreigners," holders of Palestinian ID cards need work permits; these may be refused, are costly and have to be renewed yearly. Depending on the government's mood, the law can be stretched to cover small shopkeepers, craftsmen, even barrow-vendors. Palestinian workers are also required by law contribute 18 per cent of their salary to a social security fund from which they cannot benefit. The reconstruction of the state means that these rules will be applied with renewed vigour.

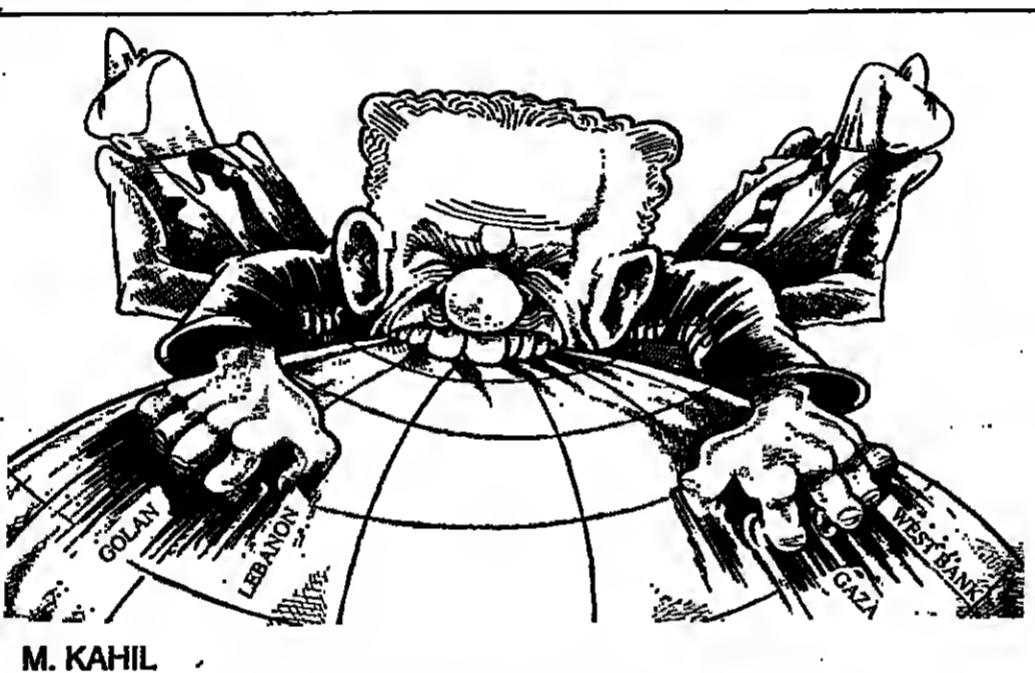
In the '70s, Palestinian income and living standards rose as a result of remittance, higher technical skills, and the growth of an alternative Palestinian economy based on the resistance. This brief "golden age" was sharply reversed by the 1982 invasion, bringing heavy human and material losses and the end of many PLO jobs and benefits. With the Lebanese economy practically closed to Palestinian labour, and migration to the Gulf sharply reduced, unemployment was widespread until the return of the resistance in 1985.

Other factors since 1982 have contributed to lowering living standards: steep inflation linked to the Lebanese economic crisis; losses from further rounds of fighting; cuts in aid and services. The Gulf war has also affected Palestinians in Lebanon, through

loss of jobs and remittances. Families without salaried workers, dependent upon aid, are particularly vulnerable.

Some ideas of the extent of near destitution is given by the figure of UNRWA's "hardship cases": 8,636 families comprising 34,000 individuals as of March 1991. To appreciate this figure, one needs to know first, that there is a ceiling on the total sum available, second that to qualify, the family head should be dead, handicapped, over 60, or an under-age orphan; the family should have no son over 18; and its monthly income should not exceed \$90. According to a social worker, 60 per cent of Palestinians in Lebanon are currently living below the U.N. poverty line. If people are not visibly starving, it is because of free accommodation and the fact that the resistance still provides a minimal safety net.

The impact of the Taif process on Palestinian employment will become clearer in the next few months. In April, the PLO asked that its 10,000 fighters in south Lebanon be reorganised into a PLA unit under Lebanese army command. There were some signs of Syrian support for this proposal. Now, with Lebanese-PLO negotiations frozen, and the Lebanese army encouraged by its victory in Sidon, it is likely that all Palestinian demands — military, political and civic — will be ignored. If the eventual outcome is demobilisation of most resistance fighters and cadres, without compensatory investment in Palestinian workshops and training, the situation will become much more serious — Middle East International.



Annexing 13% of West Bank keeps most settlers in Israel

By Jon Emmanuel

AT least 70 per cent of Israelis living in West Bank could be brought within Israel's borders without moving them an inch, by annexing just 13 per cent of the West Bank with an Arab population under 50,000, according to most recent population figures.

In the most concentrated area of settlement, almost one-third of the entire Jewish population of the West Bank lives on 4 per cent of the land, among fewer than 25,000 of the West Bank's 800,000 Palestinians.

These statistics are drawn from an examination of Jewish and Arab population figures, dating from June, obtained from the Council of Settlements and the Civil Administration in the West Bank. They suggest that Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank are not inextricably meshed, making separation of the West Bank from Israel impossible, but that Israel does have a decisive demographic hold on specific areas.

The 13 per cent land area includes six separate regions contiguous to the pre-1967 border, with more than 40 settlements. It encompasses all but two of the 10 largest settlements. Control over this area would, for topographical reasons, increase access to the main acquirers which are found beneath the coastal side of the territories.

The are around Rosh Ha'ayin, where settlement is most intensive, is especially convenient for drilling and provides relatively cheap water, a spokesman for Mekorot, the national water carrier, said.

Lack of access to this area would drive up water costs to Palestinians, adding to the toughness of negotiations over the area, but also providing a reason for mutual concessions.

Since most of the government's building activity is currently taking place within these six areas,

the figures indicate that, despite its declared determination to eventually settle the Land of Israel, it is concentrating on consolidating certain parts.

Although over half the area of the West Bank has been bought or declared state land, more than 80 per cent will remain unsettled or contain only small, isolated settlements as the government heads into the first stage of peace talks.

Area 1 includes Ariel and 32,000 Jewish inhabitants on 220 square kilometres.

Area 2, surrounds Area 1, and has about 3,000 Israelis on about 250 square kilometres.

Area 3 includes Gush Etzion, with 5,000 on 100 square kilometres.

Area 4, Ma'ale Adumim, 15,000 on 70 square kilometres.

Area 5, Givat Ze'ev, 6,000 on 50 square kilometres.

Area 6 around Latrun has about 5,000 Israelis on 90 square kilometres.

This totals 66,000 people on 780 square kilometres. In addition, several of the 14 new settlements on the Green Line about these areas and will eventually expand into them. The total area of the West Bank is almost 6,000 square kilometres and the highest estimated number of Jewish residents is 85,000-100,000.

Two other areas — eight settlements south of Hebron (200 square kilometres) and three west of Jenin (40 square kilometres) — can be linked easily to Israel without annexing virtually any Arab villages. They add little to the Jewish population, but would require annexation of an additional 4 per cent of the land.

The Jordan Valley with its 25 settlements over 1,000 square kilometres (some 17 per cent of the West Bank) of sparsely populated territory would add little Jewish population, but the northern section could be sliced off if the intention is to keep as many Israelis as possible where they are, while still leaving close to 80 per cent of the land for a possible

The 14 Palestinian villages in the area include Azzun and Bidya, with a combined population of 6,630. A handful of the others have about 2,000 residents; most have fewer than 1,000.

The Jewish villages are connected by a network of roads which ensures that no Israeli need ever pass through an Arab village

— The Jerusalem Post.

THE Jordanian press in the past week dedicated its commentary and the writers' columns mostly to the peace process and prospects for its success and failure, but domestic coverage was also given some attention.

In the view of Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, the Madrid conference was a complete American accomplishment. He said that the U.S. administration had convinced all the parties to head for Madrid and assured them that the conference would be crowned with success. Therefore, he said, any failure would be squarely placed on the U.S. administration.

Another columnist in Al Ra'i, Bader Abdul Haq, criticised the United States for refraining from imposing its will on the Israelis to force them to abandon the Arab lands. The writer said that when Washington says it cannot impose solutions on the Israelis and the Arabs, it is offering Mr. Shamir a free hand and hardening his position at the negotiations. Such an attitude, Abdul Haq said, gives rise to questions about the real intentions of the U.S. administration and its plans for the Middle East region in the coming stage.

A columnist in Al Ra'i, Tareq Masarweh, said that Prime Minister Taher Masri will be advised to hold consultations with all the parliamentary blocs before embarking on a wide-base restitutive which, he said, should see members of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Constitutional Bloc entering the government.

The paper said that Mr. Shamir's actions constituted a serious challenge to Washington and Moscow which are co-sponsoring the peace party.

According to Hosni Ayesh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, the peace conference will prove one of two things: that the international legality and U.N. resolutions are respected in all cases, or, the inability of international power to end aggression and occupation, which means continued prevalence of the law of the jungle.

In the view of columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, initial sessions at the Madrid conference dealt a defeat to Mr. Shamir who hurried home to escape facing further debacles.

Salamah Eikour said that Mr. Shamir was left isolated at the Madrid meeting and his attitude proved to the world that his government was not oriented towards peace in exchange for land, but rather towards ignoring the Palestinian rights and hold on to occupied territory.

Mohammad Doudieh in Al Dastour said that Israel would remain the enemy of the Arab World until it ends its aggression and its occupation of Arab land.

The writer said that if Israel is really oriented towards peace, it could at least halt its provocation against the Lebanese, stop the ongoing settlements and end its attacks against Arab citizens of the occupied territories.

Sawt Al Shaab urged Presidents George Bush and Gorbachev to interfere in the second stage of the peace conference and put an end to the arrogance of the Shamir government.

Should the Israeli prime minister be allowed to have his way, he would abort the whole peace process through his intransigent position and through his determination to foil Arab attempts to regain

the occupied territories.

S. Africa accepts invitation to Barcelona Olympics

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's Springboks leaped back into the Olympic arena with the announcement that they would compete in next year's summer games.

Sam Ramsamy, chairman of the National Olympic Committee to South Africa (NOCSA), said his committee had decided to accept an invitation to go to Barcelona, signalling the end of 32 years of isolation enforced by the republic's apartheid policies.

"I am happy to say that the executive committee to NOCSA has decided unanimously to send a team to the Barcelona Olympics," Ramsamy said to cheers from the audience.

South Africa last took part in an Olympics in Rome in 1960, with an all-white team, and was expelled from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) 10 years later because of its race segregation policies.

It was re-admitted to the IOC in 1984 as a reward for President F.W. de Klerk's decision to scrap apartheid and the Olympic guardians then invited South Africa to send a team to Barcelona — an invitation which was accepted Wednesday.

"This is the first time that South Africa has competed in the Olympic Games. Before... only a section of South Africa did," Ramsamy told a news conference.

He unveiled a flag of red, green and blue stripes on a grey di-

'Magic' Johnson has AIDS virus, retires

INGLEWOOD, California (R) — One of the United States' best-known athletes, basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson, has announced that he had the AIDS virus and was retiring from the game.

The news, which Johnson revealed in cool, matter-of-fact tones at a news conference, stunned the United States from the top echelons of the sports world to neighbourhood basketball courts.

"Because of the HIV virus that I have attained, I will have to retire from the (Los Angeles) Lakers today," said Johnson, 32, whose combination of size and agility on the court and personal charm made him one of the most popular U.S. sports figures.

"I just want to make clear that I do not have the AIDS disease, I have the HIV virus," said Johnson, his 2.06-metre (6-foot-9) frame towering over the microphones.

He said his wife had tested negative for the HIV virus, which causes AIDS.

"I plan on going on, living for a long time, buggering you guys," he told reporters at the packed news conference.

Johnson, who found out he had the virus Wednesday afternoon, said he would campaign for "safe sex" practices, which can

stop the virus.

His doctors, Michael Mellman,

said it was unclear how Johnson,

named to the 1992 U.S. Olympic basketball team to compete in Barcelona, Spain, and contracted

the virus.

"Sometimes we think only gay

people can get it, it can't happen

to me. Here I am saying it can

happen, even to Magic Johnson,"

Johnson said, looking composed

and relaxed.

Hundreds of young fans, many

of them crying, milled around the

entrance to the great western

forum, home of the Lakers in the

Los Angeles suburb of Inglewood.

"This is absolutely the most

horrible news. This is the most

horrible thing that has happened

to the Lakers and I have followed

them since I was little kid," a fan

said, choking back tears.

A woman, also in tears, said:

"I am in shock. It's like he is my son."

Lakers owner Jerry Buss said:

"This comes as a terrible shock to us. It is devastating."

Just before the tip-off at a New

York Knicks game at Madison

Square Garden, Knicks coach Pat

Riley, Johnson's former coach in

Los Angeles, asked the crowd to

stand in a moment of silence in

support of Johnson.

Johnson, one of the National

Basketball Association's greatest

players ever, led the Lakers to

five championships during his 12-

year professional career. He was

named the league's Most Valuable

Player three times.

Johnson was an unprecedented

player, combining the grace and

skills of a play-making guard with

the size and power of a forward or

centre.

He was the best-known celebrity

since actor Rock Hudson to ack-

nowledge having tested positive

for the AIDS virus.

Johnson missed the Lakers'

first three games of this season

due to what the team called de-

hydration and fatigue caused by

influenza. He learned he had the

virus after taking a blood test in

connection with a life insurance

policy.

AIDS — acquired immune de-

ficiency syndrome — gradually

strips the body of its defences

against disease. There is no

known cure but medicines can

delay for years the onset of sym-

ptoms after a person has been

infected with HIV — the human-

immuno deficiency virus.

With his wide smile and his

popularity stretching from the

sports elite to inner city slums,

Johnson earned millions of dol-

lars for commercial endorse-

ments.

Johnson was married for the

first time in September, to college

sweetheart Earletha Kelly, 32, at

his parents' church in Lansing,

Michigan.

"I just want to say that I will

miss playing and I will become a

spokesman for the HIV virus for

the young people so they will

practice safe sex, because some-

times are a little naive and they

think it can't happen to them," he

said.

This is not like my life is over.

I'm going to live a long time. This

is another chapter in my life. It's like your

back is against the wall and you just

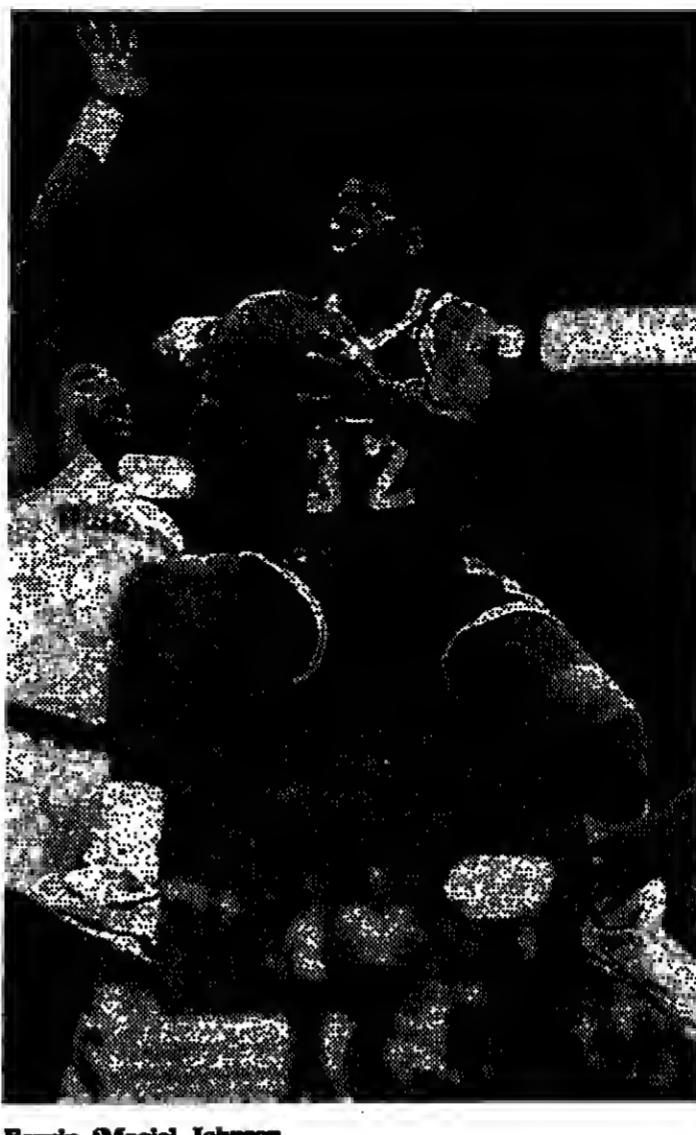
have to come out swinging.

And that's what I'm going to do.

I'm going to go on. I'm going to have

fun," he said, concluding his

statement.



Earvin 'Magic' Johnson

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1991

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer. Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You have a good chance now to combine every detail that is important to you both conventionally and up-to-date matters so that focus your mind and get it moving swiftly for the aspects indicate quick results from tackling present projects.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Now you can go straight to those who have what you want and let them know in your own inimitable way that you have some ideas helpful to you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Confer quickly with that person able to give the facts and figures that you want and let him see you are able to act quickly and not drag conversations.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is the moment for you to seek out those persons you would like to have in your life in the days ahead and to let them know how you'd make them a loyal, good ally.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You now find that whatever means must to you requires the approval and the approval gotten of regular folks who you associate with.

SCORPIO: (February 20 to March 20) Whatever you would like to do that does bring you more abundance is excellent now so early contact those of a practical turn of mind and get their help.

TODAY'S CHILD: If your child were born today she or he is very much concerned with having everything as on a sound and proper basis. This is a very good chart for having to do with understanding products that appeal to the spending of children's money. A strong interest in the performing arts and music in general is indicated.

"The stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris

HARRIS
II-2



"Your horoscope says today is a very bad day to read your horoscope."

JUMBLE

THAT SCRABLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DARAM

LOTEX

BIRDHY

ERAUSS



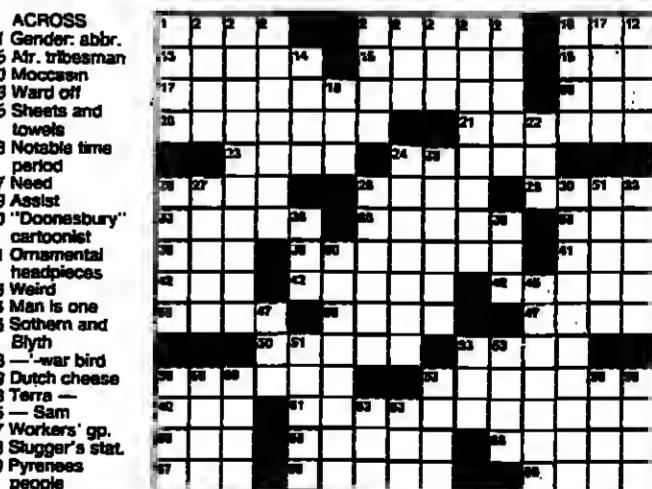
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: " " " (Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumble: JUICE BISON SCROLL TRIPLE
Answer: What they said about that habitual liar when he passed away—"HE LIES STILL."

THE Daily Crossword

by Bernard Maren



Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency		NEW YORK CLOSE Date 6/11/91	TOKYO CLOSE Date 7/11/91
Sterling Pound*	1.7755	1.7765	
Deutsche Mark	1.6363	1.6361	
Swiss Franc	1.4470	1.4471	
French Franc	5.5940	5.5963*	
Japanese Yen	129.88	129.93	
European Currency Unit	1.2505	1.2495*	

* USD Per STG * European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank interest rates Date: 7/11/91

Currency		1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.87	4.93	4.93	5.12	
Sterling Pound	10.31	10.18	10.06	10.00	
Deutsche Mark	9.00	9.37	9.37	9.37	
Swiss Franc	7.66	8.06	8.12	8.06	
French Franc	9.12	9.25	9.25	9.31	
Japanese Yen	6.25	6.15	5.87	5.62	
European Currency Unit	9.43	9.68	9.81	9.81	

Interest bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Previous Metals Date: 7/11/91

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	355.50	6.80	Silver	4.09	.089

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 7/11/91

Currency		Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar		0.6830	0.6850
Sterling Pound		1.2129	1.2190
Deutsche Mark		0.4174	0.4195
Swiss Franc		0.4720	0.4744
French Franc		0.1221	0.1227
Japanese Yen*		0.5256	0.5282
Dutch Guilder		0.3704	0.3723
Swedish Krona		0.1143	0.1149
Italian Lira*		0.0557	0.0560
Belgian Franc		0.02026	0.02036

* Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 7/11/91

Currency		Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar		1.7820	1.7910
Lebanese Lira*		0.0773	0.0780
Saudi Riyal		0.7818	0.7824
Kuwaiti Dinar		-	-
Qatari Riyal		0.7850	0.7860
Egyptian Pound		0.2000	0.2150
Omani Riyal		1.7480	1.7570
UAE Dirham		0.1850	0.1860
Greek Drachma*		0.4553	0.4895
Cypriot Pound		1.4830	1.5020

* Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market*

Index	5/11/91	Close	6/11/91	Close
All-Share	124.33		124.30	
Banking Sector	104.99		104.80	
Insurance Sector	126.16		126.03	
Industry Sector	153.81		153.91	
Services Sector	131.92		132.78	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.7635/45	U.S. dollar	Canadian dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1235/40	Deutschmarks	Dutch guilders
1.6460/70	1.8533/43	Dutch guilders	Swiss francs
1.4530/37	33.83/87	Swiss francs	Belgian francs
5.6140/90	1236/1237	French francs	French francs
130.15/16	6.0080/0130	Italian lire	Italian lire
6.4500/50	6.3780/3830	Japanese yen	Japanese yen
353.20/353.60	353.20/353.60	Swedish crowns	Norwegian crowns
		Danish crowns	U.S. dollars

One ounce of gold 353.20/353.60

U.S. dollars

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Yugoslav Armed Forces set up rockets, EC sanctions announced

BELGRADE (R) — The Serbian Yugoslav army said on Friday it had set up missiles on launch pads and selected targets as battles raged in Croatia and the European Community (EC) announced sanctions against Yugoslavia.

In their toughest warning to Croatia since fighting erupted four months ago, the Yugoslav Armed Forces told the rebel republic it risked massive casualties and ecological disaster to itself and Europe if it attacked federal missile bases.

The navy imposed a blockade on six Croatian ports and made clear it would fire on any vessel that tried to break through.

"A certain number of rockets are on the launch ramps and ready for action on selected ground targets," the air force and Air Defence Command said in a statement.

"Suicidal attacks by Ustashe (Croatian) fighters on air defence units threaten not only themselves but even people in a wider region of Central Europe."

The air force said it had set charges on fuel supplies and stored missiles to prevent Croatian forces seizing them.

It said Croatian forces had attacked missile bases in the

breakaway republic and indicated it had bio-chemical weapons it has previously denied possessing.

The federal forces have been backing Serbs in Croatia since they took up arms to oppose the republic's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia last June.

Fresh fighting erupted Friday. Fighter jets fired rockets at several Croatian targets, the port of Dubrovnik came under sporadic artillery fire and mortar and artillery battles raged in the centre of the republic, Croatian radio said.

In Rome, the European Community clamped wide-ranging economic sanctions on Yugoslavia and asked the United Nations Security Council to impose an oil embargo, Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek said.

Croatia says more than 2,500 Croats have been killed in the conflict. An unknown number of Serbs and federal soldiers have been killed.

Fighting has increased in Croatia this week, with the air force stepping up strikes from Croatia's Adriatic coast to the eastern border with Serbia, its traditional arch-rival.

On Friday, the heaviest battles appeared to be in towns around Nova Gorica in central Croatia near the closed Zagreb-Belgrade

Motorway. The navy said it had reimposed blockades at Dubrovnik, Split, Zadar, Rijeka and Ploce because Croatia had not lifted blockades of federal military bases on its soil.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said economic measures could have only a limited effect on the warring parties. "We are not pretending this is going to bring about peace in Yugoslavia tomorrow," he said.

The sanctions are intended particularly to hit Serbia, the only one of the six republics that has not accepted an EC plan to group them in a looser alliance which Serbia says spells the end of the Yugoslav state of 23.5 million people.

Western military experts said the federal forces have four Frog-7 surface-to-surface missiles and SAM-6, SAM-7, SAM-9 and SAM-13 missiles.

Although many of the army's weapons are outdated and intended for defence, one diplomat said: "This is an act of great political irresponsibility."

Davor Domazet, a spokesman for the Croatian National Guard, said the army wanted to intimidate Europe more than Croatia.

"This is just a psychological threat. It is directed less towards Croatia than towards Europe because of the sanctions it may take against Serbia," he said.

Mr. Domazet said the National Guard had been sent a copy of the army statement Thursday night.

U.K. Ruling party suffers triple by-election blow

REDCAR, England (R) — Prime Minister John Major's Conservatives suffered humiliating defeats in three parliamentary by-elections within months of a national election.

But Mr. Major said Friday the opposition Labour Party's win by a narrow margin would not translate into a power-grabbing victory in a nationwide poll.

His opponents trumpeted the outcome as a rehearsal for a general election due sometime in the next seven months.

Mr. Major told reporters at the NATO summit in Rome: "The swing from Conservative to Labour was tiny, far tinier than what we have seen in the past, far below what they would need for a general election victory."

With a nationwide test so close, the outcome of Thursday's contests spelled the worst by-election night for the Conservatives since they came to power in 1979.

Results showed Labour narrowly captured the northeast English constituency of Langbaurgh from the conservatives and easily retained their own stronghold of Hemsworth, a mining community in the north of England.

Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock said the result meant the country had rejected the Conservatives. "The government should have got the nation to vote in a general election and this morning we would have had a Labour government."

Mr. Major's party lost control of the prosperous Scottish Kirkcaldy and Desidee seat to the centrist Liberal Democrats who replaced the Conservatives as the de facto power to Scotland.

Philippine opposition party breaks up over nomination

MANILA (R) — The Philippines' largest opposition party broke up Friday when opposition leader Salvador Laurel expelled his two main rivals for the party's nomination to contest the 1992 presidential election.

The break-up of the Nationalists Party five days after the return from exile of former first lady Imelda Marcos could boost her chances of grabbing the opposition's leadership as it prepares to challenge President Corazon Aquino's government in the May polls, political analysts said.

A Nationalists faction headed by Mr. Laurel sealed the party's break-up by expelling its secretary-general, Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, and Central Committee member Eduardo Cojuangco plus five others for alleged disloyalty.

Sen. Enrile and Mr. Cojuangco, associates of the late President Ferdinand Marcos before he was ousted in 1986, had been fighting Mr. Laurel for the party's

nomination as presidential candidate.

"Any decision to amputate a part of the body is always a hard decision ... but we had to do it to avert disaster and save the party," Mr. Laurel said at a Nationalists meeting which voted to expel Sen. Enrile and Mr. Cojuangco.

Mr. Marcos had been trying to arrange a meeting of the three squabbling presidential contenders to patch up their feuds and boost opposition chances in the 1992 election.

Mr. Marcos, who is facing tax evasion and corruption charges for allegedly helping her husband plunder the economy during his 20-year rule, has said she has no political ambitions. But she has also hinted she could change her mind.

Mrs. Marcos toured refugee camps for Philippine volcano victims Friday, giving away auto-graphed sacks of rice and saying her late husband would have had the camp built better and faster.

Of the three seats, Langbaurgh was seen as the most accurate barometer of national intentions because of its mix of Conservative rural areas and industrial towns.

The winner, Ashok Kumar, a 35-year-old Asian origin, beat his Conservative rival by only 2,000 votes, a swing in support not great enough for Labour to win an overall majority if applied nationally.

Winston Churchill once said a majority of one is enough. We are the winners," Mr. Kumar said after his victory.

The Liberal Democrats' victory in Scotland made them the largest third party in Britain's parliament since 1935. Jubilant winner Nic Stephen, a 31-year-old lawyer, said it also showed Mr. Major's government had to agree to devolve power to Scotland.

ST. PETERSBURG, USSR (AP) — The birthplace of the Bolshevik Revolution cheered the demise of Communist power with skydivers, fireworks and concerts, but the festivities contrasted starkly to the angry lines at Soviet food stores.

In Moscow and elsewhere Thursday, people foraged for food in continued panic-buying before steep price increases take effect in the new year. Ethnic fighting that led to bread riots in Armenia.

The day that once was the most sacred holiday in the Soviet calendar was marked in the capital by small rallies, kept 200 metres apart by police in gray greatcoats.

Communist supporters carrying Lenin placards marched through Red Square, denouncing Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

"It's not a holiday for me" declared one older woman at the pro-Communist rally in front of the Lenin Mausoleum. "Hunger hunger."

A subdued rally of anti-Communist demonstrators, led by Russian Orthodox priests, mourned the victims of the Soviet regime.

The traditional Red Square parade of soldiers, tanks and missiles that glorified Soviet power was cancelled by Mr. Gorbachev after the failed coup disrupted the party and forced the suspension of its activities.

Less than a mile away from the Kremlin, hundreds of people lined up grimly for bread at the capital's largest bread store. Queues for milk and bread formed elsewhere in the city early on the holiday morning.

Despite the nationwide economic crisis, the mood was upbeat in St. Petersburg, where more than 10,000 people massed in front of the winter palace to cheer the official rechristening of the city after more than half a century of being called Leningrad in honour of the founder of the Soviet state.

"You, the residents of this

great city, must have pride in your city and do everything you can to make this a place of beauty and culture," Mayor Anatoly Sobchak told the crowd in front of the 200-year-old pastel palace.

The tricolour Russian flag fluttered from buildings. Stunt planes roared overhead and paratroopers plunged down through the gray sky trailing red, white and blue streamers and nearly hitting spectators in palace square.

Spontaneous small groups denouncing the Communists sprung up around the huge square. "I cannot forget the terror of communism. I cannot forget the millions who died in labour camps," St. Petersburg City Council member Marina Soliven screeched to anybody who would listen. "This is a day of national tragedy."

Among the dignitaries in St. Petersburg was the successor to the Russian throne, Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich Romanov, who arrived from Paris on his first visit to his ancestral homeland spent Thursday visiting memoirs to Russia's royal family and meeting with supporters.

34 killed in plane crash

Meanwhile, a Soviet passenger jet crashed in the Caucasus Mountains, killing all 34 people on board, the TASS news agency reported Friday.

The Yak-40, a short-range consumer-style aircraft, was flying over southern Russia when it vanished Thursday from radar shortly before it was scheduled to land in the Caspian Sea port of Makhachkala, the agency said.

A search was launched, and late Thursday the wreckage of the plane was found between the cities of Buiaksk and Makhachkala, TASS said, quoting the Soviet Ministry of Civil Aviation. All 34 passengers, including two children and four crew members, died.

The plane was flying south from Elista in the Kalmykia Autonomous Republic to Makhachkala in the Dagestan Autonomous Republic, the report said.

"You, the residents of this

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NATO declares new era of cooperation, differs on S. Union

ROME (R) — NATO leaders declared a new era of cooperation in Europe Friday, offering formal ties to former East European adversaries, but differed sharply on how to deal with the crumbling Soviet Union.

The navy said it had imposed blockades at Dubrovnik, Sibenik, Split, Zadar, Rijeka and Ploce because Croatia had not lifted blockades of federal military bases on its soil.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said economic measures could have only a limited effect on the warring parties.

"We are not pretending this is going to bring about peace in Yugoslavia tomorrow," he said.

Western military experts said the federal forces have four Frog-7 surface-to-surface missiles and SAM-6, SAM-7, SAM-9 and SAM-13 missiles.

Although many of the army's weapons are outdated and intended for defence, one diplomat said: "This is an act of great political irresponsibility."

Davor Domazet, a spokesman for the Croatian National Guard, said the army wanted to intimidate Europe more than Croatia.

"This is just a psychological threat. It is directed less towards Croatia than towards Europe because of the sanctions it may take against Serbia," he said.

Mr. Domazet said the National Guard had been sent a copy of the army statement Thursday night.

The NATO leaders said it was as demonstrated by the significant presence of North American forces in Europe."

NATO also agreed to set up a North Atlantic Cooperation Council to hold annual security talks with the nine countries of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and the Baltic States.

The first meeting of the 25 foreign ministers will be held on Dec. 20 in Brussels, where NATO has its headquarters.

The newly-democratic East European states are looking for a new security umbrella following the collapse of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact this year, but NATO leaders agreed that they would not extend the alliance's membership for the moment.

The new strategy unveiled Thursday pledges the biggest changes in forces and doctrine since the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was founded in 1949 to counter what it saw as the threat of Soviet invasion of Western Europe.

To adopt to the collapse of communism in the former Eastern Bloc, NATO plans to slim down its forces poised to resist attack from the East and create mobile multinational units that could deploy quickly to meet a threat on any front.

The new strategy also does away with the old doctrine of "flexible response" that aimed at defending the West with wave after wave of nuclear deterrent whose use would be highly unlikely.

The United States and Britain failed to convince their allies to give NATO a wider military role in world crises like the Gulf War.

Britain backed a U.S. proposal that NATO bases, intelligence and supplies could be used to help enforce U.N. resolutions and a Dutch idea that NATO could assist the 38-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in a similar way.

The summit declaration said only that NATO would continue to address broader challenges in its consultations — a bland and uncontroversial formula.

COLUMN 8

Soviet gold coins flood market

LONDON (R) — As the Soviet Union struggles to meet its mounting debts, unusually large quantities of old Russian gold coins in mint condition are finding their way onto the world market, a Norwegian dealer said.

Jan Olav Asmild, co-owner of coin dealers Oslo Myntmand, said he had recently bought 22,000 five-ruble gold coins of uncirculated high quality and with a retail value of about \$3 million from Western banks and Soviet sources.

A London-based dealer said: "What impresses me is the quantity of coins at this quality and the premium price Mr. Asmild is selling them for — which is about twice the scrap value."

Mr. Asmild said he had shipped 20,000 of the coins, each containing just under four grammes of gold, to the U.S. market and had already sold half of the remaining 2,000 coins in Norway at \$100 each. The coins portray Tsar Nicholas II and were made between 1900 and 1909, he added.

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Nigeria Airways staff stage dress protest